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RTP PREPARATION

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VI. ACTION ELEMENT - CONCLUSION

The Action Element - Conclusion

The second section of the Action Element identifies all projects to be programmed. Specifically, the Action Element shall (Government Code 65080(a)) address identified issues and needs, be consistent with adopted regional transportation goals and policies, conform to state and federal mandates (e.g. TEA 21, planning factors (Section 134 (f)), and be consistent with the financial constraints identified in the Financial Element. The Action Element implements the Policy Element. It is financially constrained and it conforms with the air quality State Implementation Plan (SIP).

Projects and programs are prioritized in the Action Element consistent with identified needs and policies. The federal conformity regulations specify (Title 40 CFR 93.106, Content of Transportation Plans) both the short term (up to 10 years) and long-term (20 years or beyond) horizon years for which RTPs of the MPOs must describe the planned transportation network and how much detail must be provided for areas subject to conformity determination requirements. The Action Element describes a future transportation system that serves the safety, mobility, air quality and other environmental objectives for the region. The result should establish an integrated set of actions utilizing transportation demand management strategies and system management strategies, include multi-modal enhancements intended to maintain and improve the system, increase operational efficiency and productivity, and achieve a coordinated and balanced regional transportation system.

The actions should be listed with sufficient information to enable geographic display, such as specifying route number or county road name, and beginning/ending post mile, or main facility address (street) and cross-street.

A. Linkages

One objective of the RTP is to clearly identify the specific transportation planning needs of the region while at the same time to comply with regional, State and federal planning, programming and air quality requirements. The Action Element clearly and specifically identifies projects to be included in the RTIP, and as appropriate, the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program, the Federal Transportation Improvement Program, and the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan. The identified actions should be defined with enough specificity of purpose, need, design concept and scope to aid in the development of these programs. Project specificity in the Action Element has other benefits, such as facilitating a finding of system conformity with the SIP, and aiding the implementation of transportation control measures (TCMs). For those projects with “Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)” components, constancy with the National ITS Architecture is required for federal funding. Project specificity will aid in determining such conformity. The Federal Air Quality Conformity Regulations have specific requirements for project detail as identified in Title 40 CFR 93.106(c). RTPs must be detailed enough to be able to ensure that the requirements of Title 40 CFR Sec. 93.109-119 are met.

The RTP should also identify and incorporate other State and local transportation plans and programs. All major transportation projects and minor projects should be understood to be part of the statewide transportation system. These interrelationships and regional linkages should be acknowledged and reflected as appropriate.

B. Action Element Overview

Within the introductory paragraphs of the Action Element, an overview should summarize the most significant aspects. Specifically, the Action Element should include a summary of the following:

- Long-range Plan
- Corridor Preservation
- Previous Plan Accomplishments
- Implementation
- Air Quality
- Land Use
- Environmental Issues
- New Technologies
- Emergency Preparedness
- Institutional and Legislative Actions
- Evaluation
- Resource Sharing, outsourcing and public / private partnerships

See Appendix D, pages D – 10 and D – 11, Action Element Overview for a full description of the above mentioned topics.

C. Transportation Strategies

The specific actions may be organized in different ways: by mode, regional transportation issues, strategies, corridors or other ways most appropriate for the region.

Implementation Strategies

Each RTPA should include a discussion regarding the following implementation strategies as appropriate for the region:

- Capital Investment;
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM);
- Air Quality (in nonattainment and maintenance areas);

- Transportation System Management (TSM);
- Land Use;
- Interregional Connections;
- New Technology;

Specific issues that should be addressed are listed in Appendix D, pages D–11, 12 and 13.

Actions by Mode

Each RTPA shall (Government Code 65080(a)) include a discussion of each of the following, as appropriate to the region. This requirement may be satisfied by discussing modes under each implementation strategy or in a section for each mode.

- Highways;
- Mass Transportation (including regional transit services, and urban rail systems);
- Non-motorized (including bicycles, pedestrians, and accessibility for persons with disabilities);
- Rail;
- Maritime;
- Aviation and;
- Goods Movement (Although not a transportation mode, “Goods Movement” is recognized as a major transportation consideration, with impact on most modes.)

Specific issues that should be addressed are listed in Appendix D, page D-13. In addition each project should be clearly and concisely represented and be accompanied by the following information:

- Project purpose and need;
- Project design concept and scope;
- Action or strategy;
- Anticipated funding source, consistent with the financial constraints of the Financial Element;
- Total or partial project development (including carry-overs from the previous RTP);
- Construction, operation and maintenance cost estimates as available;
- Route number or road name, and post miles (Metric and non-metric measures);

- County and/or latitude/longitude for those projects that are not on the highway, i.e. bicycle trails, traveler information, etc.;
- Lead agency(s) or participants;
- Implementation time frame and;
- The linkage of identified needs with each identified action.

Project Justification

To facilitate the process of project development, the specific need for the project should be identified. The project purpose and need should be clearly related to the regional goals and policies and explain how the proposed improvements should address identified deficiencies (the “purpose” of the improvements). The purpose and need of the project should be at a level of detail commensurate with the regional perspective addressed in the RTP.

The identified regional transportation needs lead to a range of solutions and the general locations of potential projects. The needs are to be considered very early in the planning phases and strongly tied to project development. In addition, the need should be the foundation of the subsequent, detailed statement of project “Purpose” and “Need” in the environmental document for the particular transportation solution. The subsequent project purpose and need statements (i.e. environmental documents, permit applications, etc.) must be consistent with the need identified in the RTP.

D. Maps

The Action Element should effectively communicate the components and time periods of the transportation system development. The combination of both narrative and graphic displays such as maps and charts should be utilized to maximize understanding of the process and results of the RTP. The Action Element should include maps showing the following:

- Short-range and long-range projects, which increase capacity and improve the operational efficiency of the network;
- Existing, short-range and long-range Levels of Service for local roads, highways, and transit systems;
- Locations of existing or planned routes, interchanges, stations, intermodal facilities, and port facilities and airports;
- Environmental resources.

In producing the graphic representations the following should be considered:

- The use of metric and standard measurement units should be used;

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- Standard format to facilitate sharing of information (i.e. legend, scale, North Arrow etc.);
- Development with Internet transmission and Website posting capabilities.